

Trim piece
(untitled)

unbekannt
ca. 700



Besatzstück einer koptischen Tunika, um 700
Entwurf/Ausführung: unbekannt
Material/Technik: Wolle, Leinen, Schlitzwirkerei
20 × 20 cm
Eigentum: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK

Coptic knitted trim pieces have survived over the centuries on the clothing of the deceased and textile burial objects. Created with great mastery and a fantastic repertoire of colors and patterns, they recount episodes from the real as well as the metaphysical world.

Examples of garment trim and furnishing fabrics produced from the third to tenth century in Egypt are commonly known as Coptic textiles. Even though the term “Copts” is still in use today to refer to Egyptians of the Christian faith, “Coptic” in the cultural sense doesn’t primarily mean Christian but rather Egyptian. The elaborately decorated pieces laid in graves to accompany the deceased have been preserved in the sand and give us insights into the imagery of the period. When they were found, the vertical bands (clavi), as well as the square and round ornament panels (tabulae, orbiculi, and sigilla), were cut out of the undecorated linen cloth of the tunics. Even with scientific methods of analysis, their exact dating remains problematic, while the previous dating method according to changing styles and the degree of abstraction has proven to be deceptive. The monochrome-purple slit tapestry depicts a

dance and hunting scene and shows a group of fragmented figures in motion that emerge—almost like an optical illusion—out of the violet background. The tapestry was executed with wool thread on a linen ground, while the fine white borders were embroidered using the “flying needle” technique. For the outer frame, a “meander pattern” from Crete was chosen, one of many popular meander patterns influenced by Hellenistic styles. Other popular motifs included detailed-naturalist or abstracted animal and plant depictions. Christian horsemen with halos are found next to pagan motifs such as winged cupids and the pleasure-seeking Dionysus with his vine-entwined staff. (Sabine Flaschberger)

<https://www.eguide.ch/en/objekt/ohne-titel-8/>